

INSIDE VIRGINIA

www.business.virginia.gov

Virginia's Central Business Web Portal

serving business & entrepreneurs



featuring
with representatives of
the Virginia Business
Information Center.
Business information and
resources for:

- starting a business**
start-up basics | registration | licensing
- running a business**
expansion | taxes | regulation
- business resources**
small business | technology
| manufacturing
- out of state businesses**
registering in VA | economic
development | tourism & film industry
| insurance & worker's comp issues



GOVERNOR ANNOUNCES BUSINESS ASSISTANCE INTERNET PORTAL

Governor Warner recently announced the launch of an Internet portal - www.business.virginia.gov - that serves as a central point for business assistance information and inquiries. Designed by DBA and the Virginia Information Technologies Agency (VITA), the portal consolidates information about Virginia's various business assistance and support services in one site.

The portal was designed from customer input and includes four major categories with relevant, descriptive listings to cover the most important information requested from businesses. By navigating these categories, users can easily find forms, online services, state bid opportunities and valuable answers to common questions.

- **Starting a Business** - serves as a link to informa-

tion relevant to businesses and entrepreneurs who are getting started, including registering and licensing procedures and permits.

- **Running a Business**- includes information such as regulations, employment and tax laws for existing businesses.
- **Business Resources**- connects businesses to services including counseling and industry organizations.
- **Out of State Businesses**- provides information applicable to out-of-state businesses seeking expansion or relocation in Virginia.

The site also has a "live chat" feature, providing businesses with real time access to the Virginia Business Information Center (VBIC), administered through DBA. VBIC's online support and assistance representatives give business users instant

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TRANSFORMING AN ECONOMY ONE STEP AT A TIME

by Gov. Mark R. Warner

When I ran for governor four years ago, like any candidate, I had a whole host of aspirations and goals for the Commonwealth. But in that campaign and since I took office, every time I've tried to distill it down to one sentence I've come back to this: I ran because I believed the kid in Martinsville shouldn't have to leave home to find a good job.

Now, you can substitute in Lebanon. Or Grundy. Or South Boston. The point is that there are communities in Virginia who once carried our Commonwealth on their shoulders, where once thriving industries like textiles, furniture manufacturing, tobacco, and coal have now declined.

And I believe that the prosperity of our Commonwealth lies in the prosperity of every individual community, in hundreds of thousands of our small businesses, and in our ability to better educate our people and attract new industry to help create a Commonwealth of opportunity for all Virginians—not just for those who live in the thriving urban and suburban markets of Northern Virginia or Hampton Roads or Richmond.

It's an understatement to say that my administration has focused its economic development efforts on rural Virginia. In fact, we've seen an end to double-digit unemployment in 12 of 13 of our hardest hit counties. But simply recruiting new jobs and new industries isn't



enough. Even making the single largest investment in K-12 education in Virginia history and developing a series of new education programs from pre-school to grad school aren't enough to guarantee a thriving economy.

That's why we've pursued a broad range of strategies through our *Virginia Works* program that capitalizes on the existing assets and targets new economic opportunities in economically distressed regions. No single strategy will remake an economy.

But as October came to a close, we were able to move forward on two things in one week that will be real economic hot spots in Southwest Virginia, and keys to economic transformation.

INSIDE **VIRGINIA**
is an informational
e-publication intended
to provide Virginia
businesses with a
competitive advantage.
Brought to you by the



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First, the creation of 300 new, high-tech jobs in Russell County with CGI-AMS Inc. demonstrated what a united front at the negotiation table can do for attracting and keeping companies of worldwide caliber in Virginia. We've strengthened our approach to economic development through our willingness to forge innovative partnerships among leaders and businesses on the local, regional, and state levels, making Virginia a more effective player in the global economy. These jobs will boost educational attainment throughout the region, and have an extraordinary impact on spin-off and support businesses, partly

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EDCORNER

THE TOURISM TOBACCO LOAN PROGRAM is a new loan program created to assist eligible tourism-related businesses in Virginia's tobacco region. It is a result of a partnership between the Virginia Tourism Corporation, the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission and the Virginia Small Business Financing Authority (VSBFA). It is administered by the Department of Business Assistance and funded through the VSBFA.

Three of the primary goals of the program are to attract private capital investment, to create higher-skilled and higher-wage jobs and to increase tax revenues in affected communities. Assistance is available in the form of direct loans or loan guarantees for any type of financing need including short-term working capital financing. Completed applications will be reviewed by the VSBFA and the Virginia Tourism Corporation. For more information about eligibility requirements or to obtain an application, visit www.dba.virginia.gov/financing.

WORKFORCE SERVICES PROGRAM RECEIVES RECEIVED TELLY AWARD

DBA's Workforce Services Jobs Investment Program was recently honored with the national Telly Award for the production of a client training video. The Annual Telly Awards honor outstanding local, regional and cable television



commercials and programs, as well as quality video and film productions.

The winning entry was an orientation training video produced in English and Spanish for Workforce Services' client Augusta Lumber, a Virginia manufacturer of Appalachian hardwoods. DBA's Workforce Services program provides customized recruiting and training services to companies that are creating new jobs or experiencing technological change.

This year, the Telly Awards received more than 12,000 entries from all 50 states and 5 continents. Currently, Telly Awards are considered to recognize the finest in creative work among industry professionals. www.tellyawards.com

VEDA HONORS DBA'S PRESTON WILHELM

The Virginia Economic Developers Association (VEDA) presented Preston A. Wilhelm, Sr. with the 2005 Cardinal Award at the association's fall conference and annual meeting in September.

Preston is the Director of DBA's Workforce Services Jobs Investment Program and, over the past five years alone, has been responsible for managing 1,951 economic development projects and creating 86,233 jobs for Virginians. Under Wilhelm's leadership, the application process for accessing Virginia's Workforce Services program was streamlined – giving the Commonwealth a competitive advantage over other states with similar incentives.

The Cardinal Award is the most prestigious award bestowed by VEDA to deserving members. It recognizes leadership in the field of economic development, outstanding professional accomplishments and exceptional service to the organization.

FAST GROWING FIRMS SOUGHT FOR FANTASTIC 50 NOMINATIONS

The Virginia Chamber of Commerce will again honor 50 fast-growing companies at next spring's "Fantastic 50" gala. Now in its 11th year, the Virginia Fantastic 50 Awards is



VA Business Portal cont'd

answers to questions about the resources, services and forms found on the portal. A survey is also available within the portal to collect feedback in order to make further refinements and improve service.

"Our VBIC representatives were real ambassadors for this portal," DBA Director Mike Eisenman explained. "They hear from thousands of Virginia businesses and entrepreneurs every year and were able to provide a great deal of insight on the content of this new tier of information access."

The need for increased access to information via a centralized entry point was sparked by the efforts of a steering committee, comprised of business, educational and state agency leaders throughout the Commonwealth.

"The biggest challenge in creating the business portal was organizing the vast amount of information and resources to ensure that the questions and needs of business users and other customers are answered in the most efficient manner possible," said Scott Somerhalder, General Manager of VITA's virginia.gov. "We commend the Department of Business Assistance for their dedication and expertise in defining the critical content for each of the major portal areas."

www.business.virginia.gov

the only program that highlights Virginia's fastest growing companies on a statewide basis. It is open to all types of businesses.

Nominations are welcome from local chambers of commerce, economic development organizations and other business groups within the state.

Virginia companies may also nominate themselves through November 30. The honor roll of winners is touted in local and statewide media – providing well-deserved publicity. For more information, visit www.vachamber.com or www.goodmanco.com.

Gov. Mark R. Warner cont'd

just by increasing the affluence of the region's consumers.

Second, we were able to invest \$6.1 million in *Virginia Works* funding for Southwest and Southside communities—money that will help finance six initiatives, including breaking ground for a Southwest Virginia Artisan Center in Abingdon. The Center will capitalize on the popularity of the traditional "roots" music that was first played here, and Appalachian arts and crafts. The Center will showcase Appalachian Virginia's arts and crafts from a highly visible and easily accessible 40,000 square foot facility located close to Interstate 81. We plan to build a second artisan center near the junction of Interstates 81 and 64, near Staunton. Tourists attracted to such a center are also likely to check out our stunning parks, trails, and rivers, for a little eco-tourism.

I know the traditional industries that once dominated these regions didn't decline overnight, and we won't rebuild these economies quickly or with government programs alone.

But these announcements show we are laying the foundation for a new era of economic success in these regions, building upon progress started with projects such as the Southside Regional Broadband Initiative. By undertaking the largest public broadband deployment in the country right now—connecting 700 miles, 700,000 Virginians and more than 19,000 businesses with 21st century infrastructure—we will continue to lure economic opportunities to these areas by giving them the tools they need to succeed.

Together with visionary leaders and business people in many of these communities, we're making progress and creating new opportunities that – just maybe – will keep those kids in the towns and counties where they grew up.

GOVERNOR'S MOTORSPORTS INITIATIVE ASSISTS RUSTBURG COMPANY

SONNY'S AUTOMOTIVE RACING, INC., a manufacturer of racing engines in Lynchburg, recently qualified for economic grant funding through the Virginia Tobacco Indemnification and Community Revitalization Commission. The funding was part of Governor Warner's Motorsports initiative, established in 2003 to promote and support motorsports activities in Virginia as a means for economic development. Sonny's expansion plans include more than \$450,000 in capital investment and the addition of three employees. Sonny's Automotive is currently working with DBA through the Workforce Services Division's Small Business Program.

CONTACT YOUR LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE

THE VIRGINIA SMALL BUSINESS ADVISORY BOARD is a gubernatorial-appointed board serving a particular congressional district. To determine appropriate support for their respective business communities, board members assess small business concerns and report their findings for action. They also make

the businesses in their districts aware of state supported services. For contact information, visit www.dba.virginia.gov/05-06%20SBAB%20Member%20List%20bw.pdf.

DBA'S SOUTHWEST OFFICE OFFERS FULL SUPPORT TO BUSINESS COMMUNITY

DBA has rounded out support to business communities in Southwest Virginia with the selection of **SANDY RATLIFF** as the new Business Outreach Manager. Sandy will be working out of DBA's Abingdon office, which serves 22 localities in Virginia's southwest region.

The office currently works with new and expanding businesses to offer workforce incentives. With the addition of Ratliff, the office will expand its offerings to include business program referrals, start-up assistance, community support services and, for qualifying businesses, agency loan services.

Ratliff is a seasoned economic developer with more than 15 years of service in the region. She is a graduate of the Economic Development Institute through the University of Oklahoma in Norman, OK and Virginia Intermont College, Bristol, VA.

PARTNERING CORNER

THE VIRGINIA DEPARTMENT OF BUSINESS

ASSISTANCE works closely with the Virginia Small Business Development Center Network to meet the needs of the Commonwealth's small business communities. DBA often refers businesses to their SBDC for regional and local business conductivity including financing and marketing. The SBDC Network is an organization of 29 local SBDCs across the state that assist with business planning, marketing, financial analysis, access to capital, business start-up and other specialized services. The network is the most extensive business development program in the Commonwealth and a strategic alliance between the U.S. Small Business Administration, George Mason University and local sponsors throughout Virginia. These vital partners include universities, community colleges, chambers of commerce, municipalities, economic development organizations and private companies. For more information or to contact your local SBDC, visit www.virginiabsdc.org/. Most recently, the SBDC's have worked with DBA offering "Selling To The Commonwealth" procurement assistance workshops in localities statewide.

CALENDAR

12.07.05

**VA Economic Development Seminar
"The Commonwealth's Growth Engine:
Virginia's Existing Business"**
RICHMOND

12.07.05

VASCUPP SWAMfest 2005
RICHMOND

**Visit www.dba.virginia.gov for more details
and other events.**

ASK VBIC

Calls to the Virginia Business Information Center are not always budding entrepreneurs or existing businesses. Many of the calls allow VBIC to provide a service to Virginia businesses.

How do I get a mortgage broker's license?

Mortgage broker licenses are issued by the State Corporation Commission's Bureau of Financial Institutions. You can find application materials [here](#). Call them at (804) 371-9690.

How do I apply for a sales/use tax exemption for my non-profit?

File this exemption application with the Virginia Department of Taxation.

VIRGINIA BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER

(804) 371-0438 OR (866) 248-8814 toll free
vbic@dba.virginia.gov

ARE YOU IN THE DARK ABOUT YOUR NEXT BUSINESS MOVE?

THEN LET US SHED SOME LIGHT!

We are the Virginia Department of Business Assistance and our business is your success! DBA serves as the business community's voice, partner and representative to state government. We are your link to countless resources throughout the Commonwealth and beyond. We can help your business by:

Obtaining Capital, Workforce Recruiting & Training for eligible businesses

Serving as a Resource for Business Information & Assistance

Networking & Knowledge through DBA Events

For more information on these services or general business questions contact our:

VIRGINIA BUSINESS INFORMATION CENTER at
804-371-0438 | 1-866-248-8814 toll free | VBIC@DBA.VIRGINIA.GOV